



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 408

May 2019

When Do Flowers Bloom?

by Joan R. Simon

Dr. Elsa Cleland, Professor of Ecology, Behavior and Evolution at UCSD, introduced her talk to the TPDS meeting on April 12 by saying “You’re my people.” And indeed we are! Her research involves the phenology (timing) of plants -- when they germinate, leaf and bloom -- and how native and non-native plant interactions are changing with warming temperatures. For those on the front lines battling invasive plants at Torrey Pines (i.e., the Whacky Weeders, who have been taking out *Erharta longiflora* and other non-natives since 2005), seasonal timing is very important.

Because of global warming, Dr. Cleland explained, plant phenology is beginning to change. In general that means earlier germination and blooming. But not always. Global data has been collected for 1634 species across 50 locations on 4 continents. These data show that while most species flower earlier with warming, there are exceptions, with some plants flowering even later than their normal timing. Dr. Cleland’s research sought to discover what factors besides (or in conjunction with) warming are affecting plant phenology.

One question she explored was whether the response to warmer temperatures was influenced by what neighboring plants were doing. Dr. Cleland’s research looked at the White Mountains in eastern California, where arid, alpine conditions prevail and “cushion” (compact, low-growing) plants flourish. In the past 60 years, the climate has become warmer and drier in this area, and one result has been an increase in Sagebrush (*Artemisia rothrockii*), a relative of our *Artemisia californica*. When growing in open areas, cushion plants flowered earlier with warmer temperatures, as would be expected. But when growing in the shade of *A. rothrockii*, cushion plants actually flowered later with warmer temperatures, a non-optimal response that may have contributed to cushion plant declines in recent decades.

Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, May 11, 9:00 am

Location: St. Peter’s Episcopal Rec Hall, Del Mar

Speaker: Jennifer Brandon, Price Postdoctoral Fellow, Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Topic: Marine Debris in the California Current and North Pacific

Jennifer Brandon is a biological oceanographer who got her PhD. studying plastic pollution in the Pacific Ocean, specifically looking at microplastics in the North Pacific Subtropical Gyre. She created new methods for quantifying the smallest microplastics and examining how they were entering the oceanic food chain.

Refreshments: Docents with last names beginning with **M-N-O** will be responsible for providing snacks for this meeting.

How successfully do exotics compete with natives? California Floristic Province, which covers a large part of California, is a biodiversity hotspot containing 4200+ native species and subspecies and 1800+ non-native species. In controlled growth chamber experiments, non-natives germinate faster than natives, which means that early-emerging exotic species will preempt space and resources and suppress the later-germinating native species. But controlled experiments show that native species benefit as much as non-natives when getting an early start. So the question is: Why haven’t natives adapted to earlier germination?

One reason, Dr. Cleland explained, is that early

Inside

When Do Flowers Bloom (cont)	2
Meeting Minutes	3
Docents of the Month	4
Children’s Program	5
Earth Day at the Reserve	5-7
TP Book Club	7
NDS – Kumeyaay	8
Roving Interpreter Training	8
Bird of the Month	9
Bird Survey	9

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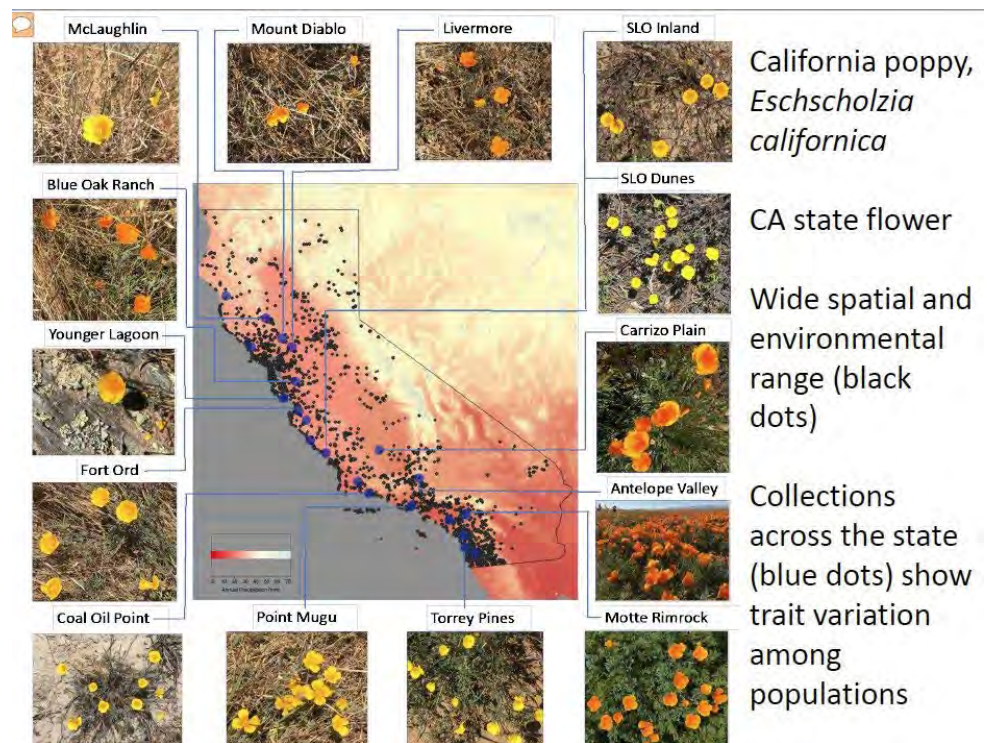
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FLASH From Joy Inton: Don't forget to donate your ZooNooz magazines to the Museum Shop.

emerging plants are highly visible and risk being eaten by herbivores. Also germinating too far ahead of the normal rainy season can lead to mortality before the onset of consistent winter rains. One suggestion for controlling invasive species is to manipulate the germination of invaders by watering them in the summer, well before reliable rains are due. The expectation is that they would die out, leaving the terrain open for natives, which, do not normally respond in the same way to early watering.

One piece of local good news is that the variant of the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) in Southern California is more drought-tolerant than the northern varieties and thus more viable with warmer temperatures. Conservation managers are debating whether to introduce the southern strains to northern areas undergoing restoration. Assisting the gene flow would help the northern populations adapt to drought, but it might also homogenize the natural genetic variation and put the population at risk.

Docent weeders and non-weeders alike look forward to an update on native and exotic phenology from Dr. Cleland in a few years.



Nature Discovery Series

Torrey Circle Pavilion (next to the Lodge)

Free Public Events

Sat. May 18, 9:30 – Birds of Torrey Pines State Reserve by Marty Hales, followed by a hike.

Sat. June 15, 9:30 – Insects and Spiders of Torrey Pines by Johnson Jou and Joy Inton, followed by a hike.

Sat. July 20, 9:30 – Signs Along the Trails by Barbara Wallach, followed by a hike.

General Meeting Minutes: April 13

Meeting called to order at 9:00 am by President **Janet Ugalde**.

Speaker: Elsa Cleland, Professor, Division of Biological Sciences, UCSD, presented a very interesting lecture titled *The Role of Phenology in Species and Ecosystem Responses to Climate Change and Invasion* (see article on the front page).

President's Report: **Janet Ugalde** reminded the docents of the upcoming third annual Guy Fleming House Tour and Soiree on Saturday, April 27, at 5:00 pm. She announced that the board had approved a TPDS partnership with TPA for this event and future events, such as Wine in the Pines. This partnership is merely a formality to avoid some newly imposed State fees. TPA still receives all income from these events, but TPA is also responsible for insurance and any fees not waivable.

Vice President's Report: **Roger Isaacson** proposed a docent email list to be available on our website under [Docent Login](#), and therefore password protected. When opened in a browser, the emails will all be active - i.e, clickable. For now, we will not include phone numbers or ID photos, but they could be added in the future. Docents will be able to opt out of this list, so contact Roger if you do not want to be included. Roger also stated he has updated the Better Impact (BI) Users FAQs and sent out an email to docents with that information.

Treasurer's Report: **Gerry Lawrence** presented the Treasurer's Report YTD through March 31, 2019. Overall the TPDS finances are in excellent shape with 83% of our balance in CDs. Donation gifts were up for the quarter as several were received in memory of **George Beardsley**. This report is posted on the library bulletin board and on our website under "[Society Docs](#)." Gerry also told us that the Society tax returns for 2018 have been filed.

Roving Interpreter Training: **Annette Ring** announced that annual training for Roving Interpreter will be held on Saturday, May 11 at 1 pm at the Torrey Circle Pavilion. **Kyle Knox** and **Ingo Renner** will give presentations, followed by a walk on the trail with an experienced Roving Interpreter. This training is especially for the Class of 2018 and also for docents who would like a refresher. Contact Annette if you would like to attend.

Joan Nimick Memorial: **Barbara Wallach** announced that the memorial service for **Joan Nimick** (Class of 1989) will be on May 18 at 11:00 am. As per the family's wishes, contact Barbara for an invitation if you would like to attend the service. Joan was instrumental in creating our Children's Program and was Docent of the Year in 1995. (See the article in the [March 2019 Torreyana](#).)

La Jolla Half Marathon: **Joan Simon**, speaking for **Ann Smith Mercandetti**, announced the La Jolla Half Marathon on Sunday, April 28. She had a signup sheet for docents to volunteer. Docents will need to be at the Reserve before 6:30 am since North Torrey Pines Road will closed at that time. This event is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of La Jolla, and the \$100,000+ earned by this event goes to various children's programs in the San Diego area. Contact Ann if you can volunteer.

iNaturalist Competition: **Margaret Fillius** presented a *Spotlight On* about the upcoming City Nature Challenge competition (April 26 - 29), where photographs of nature are taken and posted using the [iNaturalist app](#). It started as a competition between San Francisco and Los Angeles, and last year San Diego participated for the first time. Margaret encouraged docents to take part and showed how to use the app.

San Diego Safari Park Tour: **Joy Inton** will be running a private African Tram tour on Wednesday, May 22 at 9:00 am (before the park opens). It is free admission for San Diego Zoo members and \$56 for regular adult admission. Space is limited, so contact **Johnson Jou** or Joy if you are interested.

Whacky Weeders Needed: **Lynne Small** repeated her plea for additional docents to volunteer at weeding for the next couple of months. The invasive species are competing with our wildflowers for space as well as spreading unwanted seeds for next year. (Weeders meet at 8:30 am Mondays and 9:30 am Thursdays.) [Contact Lynne](#) to be placed on her email list.

General: **Ingo Renner** stated that everything is all set for Earth Day on April 20. He thanked docents in advance for participating in this important event. **Steve Neal** for **Kristine Schindler** announced a lagoon and road cleanup on April 18 at 2:30 pm, in partnership with Halozyne Therapeutics for the third year in a row. Steve also encouraged docents to consider leading weekend Public Walks. TPDS needs more docents to sign up for these walks in advance. A suggestion to get over the trepidation of leading your first walk is to pair up with a classmate or friend and share leading the walk.

Docents of the Month: **Lynne Small** and **Ann Smith Mercandetti**. Lynne has done a fantastic job leading the *Whacky Weeder* docents and volunteers, especially in this year of above-average rainfall and therefore, weed growth. Ann has spent many, many days weeding (mostly *Ehrharta*) around the Lodge and Guy Fleming Trail. She also has been an excellent leader of docents for special events like the La Jolla Half Marathon and the Susan B. Komen Breast Cancer Walk. Ann also participates in the Children's Program.

Refreshments: At May's General Meeting, docents with last names starting with **M-N-O** are responsible for snacks. Meeting ended at 11:17am.

Docents of the Month: Lynne Small and Ann Smith Mercandetti

Photos by Herb Knüfken

Lynne:

I first arrived in California when I was 7 years old. We were a hiking, car camping, national park visiting family. My mother especially loved the desert, and many a Thanksgiving dinner was in some remote cafe or a can of turkey stew over a campfire. Under my older brother's influence we eventually became a backpacking, Sierra Club joining, even mountain climbing family. So I have an outdoors background with even a tiny bit of rock climbing, but not at all a naturalist background.



The next step was a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Reed College in Oregon, then an M.A. and Ph.D. in mathematics from Yale. I married, had two kids, became a math professor at the University of San Diego and was overwhelmingly busy for several decades. As I was beginning to get my head above water from that, **Barbara Wallach** lured me into weeding at the Reserve. Somehow she knew I'd love it.

When I retired in 2011, I decided to become a docent, and only through the docent training did I finally become interested in the details of all that beautiful, natural world I'd always loved. Now it is my privilege and pleasure to coordinate the Whacky Weeders. I scout out what weeding needs doing, try to figure out how we can be the most useful among many choices, scramble to get IDs for mysterious plants, write email notices, chat with visitors who figure an orange vest means you know the answers, and interact with State Parks personnel. In other words, I walk all over our wonderful Reserve, solve problems (math people like that), learn more, write a little, talk to nice visitors, and work with great docents, volunteers,

park aides, rangers and ecologists. I am grateful to the Docent Society for all the good it does and all the opportunities it offers and, in another vein, to all the Whacky Weeders who work week after week to protect our native habitats.

Ann:

I think my all-time favorite movie is *Rob Roy*, in which one of his sons asks questions and Rob Roy responds, "Honor is a man's gift to himself. Women are the Heart of Honor, and we cherish and protect it in them. You



must never mistreat a woman or malign a man, or stand by and see another do so."

When the son finally asks: "How do you know if you have it?" Rob Roy responds, "Never worry in the getting of it. It grows in you and speaks to you. All you need do is listen."

We seem to live in a culture which is filled with "chatter," with little emphasis on "listening." I believe Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve to be one of the places in this now large city where we can go to "listen," if we choose to do so. I suspect a number of us TP docents believe there is too much "chatter" within the Reserve, too, but we become docents to help protect the possibility of "listening." By becoming a TP docent, we have trained, and we are given the possibility of *Honoring ourselves* every time we work within the Reserve by providing a service to the people who come here. We truly cannot honor nor dishonor anyone else, but each TP docent has *chosen* to honor him/herself by caring, and by appropriate sharing. I am most grateful to be one small person in the TPDS.

Children's Program

by Louis Sands, Children's Program Coordinator

HOME STRETCH! On behalf of thousands of deserving schoolchildren in San Diego County, thank you in advance to the docents who will have served this year's Children's Program. Our last day of service is May 30, 2019.

Despite Mother Nature's success in making rescheduled field trips an almost weekly occurrence, our always flexible, ever-dedicated docents continued to impress! And it

has been an absolute pleasure to witness the contributions of new Children's Program docents; we extend a heartfelt thank you and welcome to: **Laura Chaing, Marian Edelbrock, Ray Eller, Serena Gräedel, Malana Tabak, Myrna Trust, and Rosemary Wareham.** You've ALL done amazing work for this program!

If you haven't participated yet, there's still time. We will be busy in May, and we could certainly use your support.

Please visit the website and sign up:

cp.torreypine.org/reservations/Private/docent_signup.php

Earth Day at the Reserve

by Suzan Potuznik

Photos by Wayne Kornreich, Joan Simon, and Karen Fraser

Earth Day at Torrey Pines on April 20 was a very festive and successful day with a record number of visitors attending and, most importantly, eager to learn. This year **Kathy Dickey** advertised the event in numerous publications, and children and adults alike came to participate in the event. **Ingo Renner** led the team and brought together a group of booths that struck a perfect balance between learning about nature, experiencing nature, preservation, and history. Along with learning in the beautiful setting around the historic Lodge, visitors were treated to an opportunity to meet live creatures, from reptiles to insects, and to wander around the Lodge on a scavenger hunt to observe some creatures in their native habitat. Children decorated wood and cardboard cutouts of sea turtles and dolphins with seashells and studied animal tracks.

Stan Rodriguez and his son Raymond of the [Lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel](#) gave visitors a glimpse of the world of the Kumeyaay people and introduced them to counting in the native tongue through a game with sticks and pebbles (photo at right). Tools and hunting artifacts from the TPDS Children's Program brought to life the Kumeyaay from just a century ago.

Visitors learned fascinating details about native bees, birds, whales, geology and most importantly, the meaning of Staying Green on Earth and Sea from the Tortoise vs Turtle Board.

A resounding "thank you" to all the docents who made this event a tremendous success.



First stop for kids to get their Passports, provided by Patty and Bruce Montgomery. Over 100 Passports were given out.



Stan Rodriguez, from the Lipay Nation, demonstrates a counting game.



Traditional Kumeyaay basketry, all made by the Rodriguez family (not for sale)



Johnson Jou's insect collection included some live species and were a hit with everyone.



Jeff Nordland brought his live snakes and lizards



Joan Simon's grandkid's snake encounter



Kid's creations on the "glue drying bench"



Scavenger Hunt with magnifier in hand



Torrey Pines Book Club

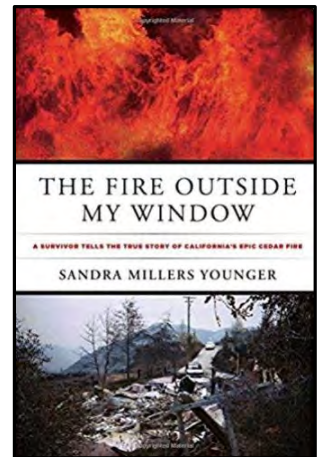
When: Tuesday, May 14, 1:00 pm

Where: Ken King's home in La Jolla

What: *The Fire Outside My Window: A Survivor Tells The True Story Of California's Epic Cedar Fire* by Sandra Millers Younger

Amazon says:

This story is both a poignant memoir and a veteran journalist's narrative nonfiction account of a catastrophic event that crippled postcard-perfect San Diego and dominated international headlines in October 2003. Author Sandra Millers Younger's miraculous saga of escape, ruin and renewal unifies a tapestry of experiences woven from more than 100 interviews with firefighters, survivors and the families of those who died.



The fire itself, one of the biggest and most destructive in California history, is the main character in this epic story--a rampaging monster, framed within historical context, battled by understaffed, under-equipped firefighters, and confronted from the rare perspective of terrified civilians caught in its path.

Timing, location and weather conspired against air tankers, fire engines and bulldozers, enabling a lost hunter's signal fire to gather strength in the mountains east of San Diego. Overnight, a swelling wind sent flames galloping toward the Pacific, killing 15 people, 12 of them the author's neighbors; incinerating more than 2,200 homes, including hers; and creating a moonscape 20 times the size of Manhattan.

In this revealing narrative, Younger takes readers into the heart of an epic firefight, telling the stories of fire chiefs and air tanker pilots trying to combat a catastrophe bigger than they had ever imagined, and recounting both survivors' and victims' desperate efforts to escape flames moving faster than fire engines could drive. *The Fire Outside My Window* is a riveting and nuanced tale that captures the intensity of a runaway wildfire, honors those lost to its fury, and celebrates the human spirit's innate capacity to triumph over adversity.

All TPDS docents are welcome. Meetings usually last a couple of hours. RSVP to Ken King if you plan to attend. (Check Member List for email or phone number.)

June 11: *The Cabaret of Plants: Forty Thousand Years of Plant Life and the Human Imagination* by Richard Mabey



Project Wildlife came with a live burrowing owl.



A few of the Children's Program's many Kumeyaay props are shown here.

Nature Discovery Series #3: The Kumeyaay

by Pete di Girolamo

Early sprinkles gave way to a beautiful day on April 6 for **Kathy Dickey**'s presentation about the Reserve's first visitors, the Kumeyaay. Kathy has spent several years gaining extensive knowledge of the Kumeyaay, and is even currently pursuing a working understanding of their language. Her talk took us back through at least 10,000 years to the time when the Kumeyaay and their forebears first came to this area following the migration over the "land bridge" or "kelp highway" that joined the Asian and North American continents at the end of the last Ice Age. The lack of recorded history for the early tribes is in part replaced by evidence of tools and remnants of habitation, such as the shell middens still to be found in the Reserve.

Early Kumeyaay were hunter/gatherers, living in dispersed family-sized transitory settlements, moving with the seasons to take advantage of resources and trade for food and materials that sustained them. Their range extended from Baja to North County and east to the Colorado River. Time and distance brought variations in language and group identity to the different bands of the Kumeyaay.

Dependence on the native flora and fauna was critical for survival. A major food was *Shawii*, the mush made from the acorns of the black oak in the mountains which were stored and carried as they moved between the mountains and coastal locations. This staple was supplemented with more local plant foods, such as seeds, nuts and berries, and the flowers, pads, fruit, and roots of cactus and yucca. Many plants provided medicinal teas and aromatics for a variety of ailments. Plant fibers, such as those from yucca leaves, were important for making clothing and footwear and as binding for their reed and willow homes.

The arrival of Spanish and Mexican settlers brought previously unknown diseases that greatly impacted the Kumeyaay population and also brought changes to their way of life with agriculture, livestock, and horses.



Kathy displayed examples of how the Kumeyaay used fibers, hunting implements, and craftworks. The presentation concluded with groups led **Jane Barger**, **Karen Fraser**, and **Pete di Girolamo** going on walks to find many of the plants that were part of the Kumeyaay resources for life in the chaparral.

Central to Kathy's story of the Kumeyaay was their pragmatic resourcefulness and adaptability to the realities of life among Spanish and American settlers while holding on to their culture. This has brought a present-day resurgence of their community and their wish that we recognize they are still here and active in our county's daily life.

Roving Interpreter Training

by Annette Ring

The 2019 Roving Interpreter class is scheduled for Saturday, May 11 at 1 pm at the Torrey Circle Pavilion. (If it rains, we will be in the Lodge video room.) Materials and quizzes will be sent out ahead of time to those who have signed up. Docents who wish to attend but haven't yet registered should contact **Annette Ring** by email (see Membership List). All docents are welcome -- both docents who haven't yet been trained as Roving Interpreters, as well as any current Roving Interpreter who wants a refresher course. For those taking the class for the first time, the three requirements for joining the team and getting the Roving Interpreter patch are:

- 1) Complete the quizzes (both TPSNR info and the trail map of the Reserve).
- 2) Attend the Ranger class given by **Ranger Kyle Knox** on Saturday, May 11 at 1 pm at the Torrey Circle Pavilion, followed by interpreting tips from **Ingo Renner**.
- 3) Hike with an experienced Roving Interpreter docent. These walks will start right after the training.

Any experienced Roving Interpreters willing to lead a walk after the training session, contact Annette. These walks will start at about 2:30 pm and will leave from the Pavilion.

There is plenty of room for both docents new to Roving Interpreter and docents wanting a refresher course. We hope to see you on May 11.

Bird of the Month: Elegant Terns

by Jack Friery; photo courtesy of Herb Knüfken.

Our featured bird this month is the **Elegant Tern**, *Thalasseus elegans* (formerly *Sterna elegans*). Elegant Terns can be seen off the beach at Torrey Pines in summer and early fall. Watch for the birds plunge-diving for small fish.

The Elegant Tern is about 16 inches long, predominately white, with a reddish-orange bill. Although terns are cousins to gulls, they can be distinguished by their pointed bills, long pointy wings and more purposeful flight.

Approximately 90-97% of all Elegant Tern nests are in one colony on Isla Rasa in the Gulf of California, Mexico. However, in recent years, more and more nests have been created in the south end of San Diego Bay. (At one point, San Diego Bay was the only nesting site for the species in the United States.)

The bird's current scientific name is derived from Greek *Thalassa*, "sea," and *elegans*, which is Latin for "elegant" or "fine."

Sources: allaboutbirds.org/guide/Elegant_Tern/overview

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elegant_tern; Unitt, *San Diego County Bird Atlas*



Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: April 2019

Number of species: 91

Cinnamon Teal 3
Blue-winged/Cinnamon Teal 4
Northern Shoveler 4
Gadwall 5
American Wigeon 2
Mallard 8
Lesser Scaup 3
Bufflehead 8
Ruddy Duck 3
California Quail 3
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Western Grebe 34
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2
Mourning Dove 12
Lesser Nighthawk 2
White-throated Swift 5
Anna's Hummingbird 21
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 14
hummingbird sp. 3
American Coot 5
Whimbrel 12
Marbled Godwit 1
Spotted Sandpiper 2

Willet 8
Heermann's Gull 3
Ring-billed Gull 12
Western Gull 22
California Gull 5
gull sp. 100
Caspian Tern 6
Royal Tern 10
Elegant Tern 10
tern sp. 325
Red-throated Loon 2
Double-crested Cormorant 1
cormorant sp. 4
Brown Pelican 118
Great Blue Heron 6
Great Egret 5
Snowy Egret 4
Osprey 2
Cooper's Hawk 2
Red-tailed Hawk 7
Belted Kingfisher 1
Nuttall's Woodpecker 2
Northern Flicker 1
American Kestrel 1
Peregrine Falcon 1
Pacific-slope Flycatcher 1

Black Phoebe 5
Say's Phoebe 2
Cassin's Kingbird 6
Hutton's Vireo 1
California Scrub-Jay 6
American Crow 21
Common Raven 32
Northern Rough-winged
Swallow 36
Tree Swallow 4
Barn Swallow 3
Cliff Swallow 7
swallow sp. 3
Bushtit 29
House Wren 4
Marsh Wren 1
Bewick's Wren 5
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 2
California Gnatcatcher 2
Wrentit 36
Western Bluebird 3
California Thrasher 6
Northern Mockingbird 5
Cedar Waxwing 22
House Finch 33
Lesser Goldfinch 15

Fox Sparrow 1
White-crowned Sparrow 27
Golden-crowned Sparrow 1
Savannah Sparrow 2
Song Sparrow 41
California Towhee 38
Spotted Towhee 25
Yellow-breasted Chat 5
Hooded Oriole 2
Red-winged Blackbird 20
Brown-headed Cowbird 4
Great-tailed Grackle 1
Orange-crowned Warbler 7
Common Yellowthroat 15
Yellow-rumped Warbler 9
Black-throated Gray Warbler 2
Lazuli Bunting 1

Observers:

Marty Hales, David Walker,
Bob Glaser, Herb Knüfken,
Marty Hales, Andy Rathbone,
Steve Neal, Mark Embree,
Kathy Dickey, Donna
Mancuso

Herb Knüfken's amazing photo gallery, including many birds, may be found here: pbase.com/herb1rm



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